



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact: Darren Rogers
Senior Director, Communications & Media Services
Churchill Downs Racetrack
(502) 636-4461 (office)
(502) 345-1030 (mobile)
Darren.Rogers@KyDerby.com

EFFINEX RED-HOT, EVEN-MONEY FAVORITE FOR SATURDAY'S GRADE I, \$500,000 STEPHEN FOSTER HANDICAP AT CHURCHILL DOWNS

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Wednesday, June 15, 2016) – Tri-bone Stables' Effinex, the \$2,682,950-earner who won last fall's Clark Handicap Presented by Norton Healthcare (Grade I), returns to Churchill Downs as the red-hot, even-money morning line favorite and 122-pound high weight for Saturday night's 35th running of the \$500,000 Stephen Foster Handicap (GI) – the centerpiece of an action-packed, prime-time program billed as “**Downs After Dark – The White Party presented by Stella Artois and El Jimador.**”

The 1 1/8-mile Stephen Foster Handicap is the richest of five graded stakes races on Saturday's special 11-race night racing card that begins at 6 p.m. (all times Eastern). Total purses on the evening are \$1.373 million, which makes it the most lucrative racing day for horsemen at Churchill Downs outside of the Kentucky Derby and Kentucky Oaks programs.

Other stakes events scheduled are the \$200,000 Fleur de Lis Handicap (GII) for fillies and mares at 1 1/8 miles featuring champion **Untapable**; the \$200,000 Wise Dan (GII) – formerly the Firecracker – for 3-year-olds and up at 1 1/16 miles on turf headlined by 2015 Eclipse Award-finalist **The Pizza Man**; the \$100,000 Matt Winn (GIII) for 3-year-olds at 1 1/16 miles showcasing Kentucky Derby-third **Gun Runner**; and the \$100,000 Regret (GIII) for 3-year-old fillies at 1 1/8 miles on turf.

The Stephen Foster Handicap has been carded as Race 8 at 9:39 p.m.

A field of seven older horses was entered Wednesday for Saturday's Foster, which is an appealing **Breeders' Cup Challenge Series “Win and You're In”** stakes event that will guarantee the winner a berth in the \$6 million Breeders' Cup Classic on Nov. 5 at Santa Anita.

Effinex, the New York-based and bred 5-year-old who is rated 16th on the **Longines World's Best Racehorse Rankings**, will attempt to secure a spot in the Breeders' Cup starting gate for a second year in a row. Last November, the **Jimmy Jerkens** trainee came closest to eventual Horse of the Year and Triple Crown-winner **American Pharoah** in the Classic at Keeneland, finishing 6 1/2 lengths back of the champion at odds of 33-1.

Effinex affirmed his form four weeks later in the Clark Handicap when he capped a strong season by surviving a five-horse battle through the stretch and beating defending champ **Hoppertunity** by three-quarters of a length. He ran 1 1/8 miles that day in 1:48.92, which was the seventh-fastest in 61 runnings of the Clark at the 1 1/8-mile distance and fastest since **A.P. Arrow** covered nine furlongs in 1:48.66 in the 2007 Clark.

Effinex enhanced his reputation as one of the nation's top older horses April 16 when he beat Santa Anita Handicap (GI) champ **Melatonin** by one length in the \$750,000 Oaklawn Handicap (GII), one month after finishing third to that rival on his home turf out west.

“He's coming in real good,” Jerkens said of Effinex, who boasts a record of 22-8-2-4—\$2,682,950. “Usually when he comes out of a big race like the one at Oaklawn he loses a few pounds but it looks like he came out of that race better than he usually does. He can be a weird horse to gauge. He's an old-time horse who just does his thing. There were times that I didn't think he was at his best and he ran really well. I never take anything lightly, especially these days when horses can be so in and out. I always go at it like it's the Breeders' Cup. I don't take his training lightly because of that. To go at it like that, you would just be kidding yourself with a horse of this quality.”

Effinex, who arrived from New York on Sunday, landed post 3 for the Foster and will be ridden by Hall of Fame jockey **Gary Stevens** for the first time. In a one-race agreement, Stevens will take the reins from regular pilot **Mike Smith**, who was already booked to ride champion **Songbird** in Saturday's \$200,000 Summertime Oaks (GII) at Santa Anita.

“It was Mike's idea so I figured that you can't argue with that,” Jerkens said. “I'm sure he'll tell Gary about his quirks. They've been riding against each other for years and they kind of cover each other that way.”

Effinex will attempt to join **No Marker** (1989-90), **Saint Liam** (2004-05) and **Blame** (2009-10) as horses who won the Clark in the fall and returned to Churchill Downs to win next spring's Stephen Foster.

The Stephen Foster Handicap field from the rail out (with jockeys, assigned weights and morning line odds): **International Star** (Florent Geroux, 116 pounds, 6-1), **Bradester** (Joe Bravo, 116, 5-1); Effinex (Stevens, 122, 1-1); **Majestic Harbor** (Corey Lanerie, 118, 5-1); **El Kabeir** (Ricardo Santana Jr., 115, 12-1); **Are You Kidding Me** (Julien Leparoux, 118, 10-1); and **Eagle** (Brian Hernandez Jr., 117, 6-1).

Favorites have a record of 34-7-10-4 (20.6%) in the Stephen Foster.

Gallant Stables' four-time graded stakes winner Majestic Harbor, now age 8 under the care of trainer **Paul McGee**, and **William S. Farish's** Grade III-winner Eagle, conditioned by veteran **Neil Howard**, ran 1-2 in the \$400,000 Alysheba (Grade II) on Kentucky Oaks Day.

Majestic Harbor, who will attempt to surpass 7-year-old **Honor Medal** (1988) as the oldest Stephen Foster winner, has won 10 races and \$1,246,814 in 41 starts over the past six years.

"I think he's gotten even better than he's ever been," Lanerie said. "He sure seems that way. Right now, he's a happy, happy horse."

Eagle (14-6-4-2—\$473,006), a 4-year-old Candy Ride (ARG) colt by Sea Gull, hopes to avenge a tough beat of his dam's sire **Mineshaft**, who lost to **Perfect Drift** by a head for Farish and Howard in the 2003 Stephen Foster – his only loss during his Horse of the Year campaign.

"Mineshaft's demeanor was second to none," Howard said. "Eagle is a little bit of a different type. He's more of a college ball player thinking that he's all that, but he's matured a lot. He's got a great personality but he's a little bit high on himself. Sometimes you have to kind of train him accordingly to keep him settled – not in a nervous way, just in a playful, good-feeling way – but he's done well on that."

Ken and Sarah Ramsey's International Star (14-6-3-0—\$1,175,029) and **Zayat Stables LLC's** El Kabeir (14-5-2-2—\$853,237) return to Churchill Downs for the Foster – one year after scratching from the 2015 Kentucky Derby because of injuries.

International Star, trained by **Mike Maker**, won last year's Louisiana Derby (GII) to sweep Fair Grounds' series of 3-year-old races. El Kabeir won the 2014 Kentucky Jockey Club (GII) at age 2 and looks to regain his best form for trainer **John Terranova II**, who scratched the 4-year-old from last Saturday's \$1.5 million Metropolitan Handicap (GI) at Belmont Park in favor of this spot.

"The Met Mile came up real tough with a real big field and we drew the rail," Terranova said. "We were kind of weighing our ideas of the two races. He's won at Churchill before and has been training well."

Joseph Sutton's 6-year-old Bradester, a three-time stakes winner at Monmouth Park for trainer **Eddie Kenneally**, is expected to contest the early lead under Bravo, who guided him to a 2 1/2-length, front-running victory in the \$77,500 Majestic Light at the New Jersey track on May 21. Overall, the Kentucky-bred son of Lion Heart has a record of 22-8-6-2—\$752,732.

Canadian-invader Are You Kidding Me from the Hall of Fame barn of trainer **Roger Attfield** will attempt to duplicate the success his 6-year-old has had on turf and synthetic surfaces. The Kentucky bred son of Run Away and Hide has won five graded stakes races, including a two-length score in the \$160,602 Eclipse (GII) over 1 1/16 miles on Woodbine's Tapeta track on May 28. Overall, Are You Kidding Me has a record of 26-7-3-6—\$755,190.

The Stephen Foster Handicap, which was elevated to Grade I status in 2002, has had a strong influence on the Breeders' Cup Classic and Horse of the Year honors. Three horses used victories in the Stephen Foster as part of their résumés in Horse of the Year campaigns: **Black Tie Affair** (1991), **Saint Liam** (2005) and **Curlin** (2008). In addition, two runner-ups were crowned Horse of the Year: **Mineshaft** (2003) and **Wise Dan** (2012). Also, **Awesome Again** (1998) and **Blame** (2010) completed same-year Foster-Classical doubles. **Fort Larned** won the Classic in 2012, and won the Foster the following year prior to a fourth-place run in his bid for a second Classic win.

Champion **Victory Gallop** owns the stakes and track record for 1 1/8 miles of 1:47.28, which was established in 1999.

Horse Racing Radio Network (HRRN) will air live coverage of the Fleur de Lis Handicap, Wise Dan and Stephen Foster Handicap from 8-10 p.m. ET. **Mike Penna**, **Jude Feld**, **Ellis Star** and **Jennie Rees** will anchor the broadcast that will air on **Sirius 93**, online at www.horseracingradio.net and **93.9 The Ville** in Louisville.

The theme for Saturday night's "Downs After Dark Presented by Stella Artois and El Jimador" is the sixth annual **"White Party"** in which guests are encouraged to wear their best summer whites.

Kentucky Derby-winning trainer **Doug O'Neill** will be on hand to accept the engraved Kentucky Derby 142 trophies for Team **Nyquist**, which includes owners **Paul and Zillah Reddam** and jockey **Mario Gutierrez**. The ceremony in the G.H. MUMM Winner's Circle, which includes an unveiling of the official event logo for the 2017 Kentucky Derby, will follow Race 5 just after 8 p.m.

Fans in attendance will be able to take pictures with Nyquist's engraved Kentucky Derby 142 trophies as they'll be on display on the north side of the paddock in the Plaza area from 5-7 p.m.

General admission to Churchill Downs is \$10 on Saturday night. Box seats are \$25 and reserved dining packages are \$70. They can be purchased online at www.ChurchillDowns.com/Tickets.

CHAMPION UNTAPABLE LOOKS TO REGAIN TOP FORM IN GRADE II, \$200,000 FLEUR DE LIS 'CAP

Winchell Thoroughbreds LLC's 5-year-old homebred mare **Untapable**, the winner of the Longines Kentucky Oaks (Grade I) and Breeders' Cup Distaff (GI) in 2014 en route to being crowned that year's Champion 3-Year-Old Filly, looks to regain her top form as the 7-5 morning line favorite in a field of six fillies and mares that were entered for Saturday's 41st running of the Fleur de Lis Handicap (GII) at Churchill Downs.

For the second year in a row, the 1 1/8-mile Fleur De Lis is a **Breeders' Cup Challenge Series "Win and You're In"** stakes event, which means the winner will be guaranteed a berth in the \$2 million Breeders' Cup Distaff (GI) at Santa Anita on Nov. 4.

The Fleur de Lis – which means "Flower of the Lily" and honors the French symbol that is incorporated into the city of Louisville's flag – will be run as Race 6 at 8:30 p.m. (all times Eastern).

Untapable, the 120-pound Fleur de Lis high weight who boasts a career record of 19-9-5-2—\$3,916,725, is a four-time Grade I-winner but hasn't reached the winner's circle in six starts since landing last year's \$600,000 Apple Blossom Handicap (GI) at Oaklawn Park. In two starts as the favorite at the Hot Springs, Ark. track this winter, Untapable was beaten a neck by **Call Pat** in the \$350,000 Azeri (GII) and finished fourth in a defense of her Apple Blossom title.

A return for a race at her Churchill Downs home base, where she is perfect in three starts with stakes wins in the 2013 Pocahontas (GII) and 2014 Kentucky Oaks (GI), is appealing to Untapable's trainer **Steve Asmussen**.

"That was why we wanted to run her back here in Saturday's race," Asmussen said. "It has been too long since we've won with her and I think we just need to take our best shot at winning and I think the significance of it being a 'Win And You're In' race for the Breeders' Cup Distaff adds to it."

Also expected to draw support is **Stoneway Farm's Ahh Chocolate**. Trained by **Neil Howard**, the improving 4-year-old filly won Pimlico's \$150,000 Allaire DuPont Distaff (GIII) on May 20. In three starts over the Churchill Downs main track, Ahh Chocolate has never been worse than second with a four-length allowance victory on Sept. 19 and a 1 1/2-length triumph in the Falls City Handicap (GII) on Thanksgiving Day. Her lone defeat at Churchill came in the Chilukki (GII) where she was second beaten 4 1/2 lengths behind **Spelling Again**.

The Fleur de Lis Handicap field from the rail out (with jockeys, assigned weights and morning line odds): Untapable (**Florent Geroux**, 120 pounds, 7-5); **Engaginglee** (**Robby Albarado**, 116, 6-1); **Paid Up Subscriber** (**Ricardo Santana Jr.**, 114, 8-1); Ahh Chocolate (**Brian Hernandez Jr.**, 118, 2-1); **Big Book** (**Corey Lanerie**, 115, 8-1); and **Brooklynsway** (**Julien Leparoux**, 117, 5-1).

California-based Big Book was supplemented to the race by owner/breeder **George Krikorian** and trainer **Tim Yakteen** for \$6,000.

THE PIZZA MAN REUNITED WITH GEROUX FOR SATURDAY'S GRADE II, \$200,000 WISE DAN

The Pizza Man, the Eclipse Award finalist for 2015 Champion Male Turf Horse owned and bred by **Midwest Thoroughbreds Inc.** of **Richard and Karen Papiese**, will be reunited with jockey **Florent Geroux** when the 7-year-old gelding meets a field of 11 3-year-olds and up in Saturday's \$200,000 Wise Dan (Grade II) over 1 1/16 miles on turf at Churchill Downs.

The Wise Dan, formerly known as the Firecracker, was renamed this year to honor **Mort Fink's** two-time Horse of the Year that compiled a remarkable lifetime record of 31-23-2-0—\$7,755,920 from 2010-14, including seven local wins and two Firecracker triumphs. One of the area's most popular horses, Wise Dan, now age 9, will return to Churchill Downs on Saturday night for the stakes race named in his honor. Trainer **Charlie LoPresti** will parade the celebrated gelding to the paddock with horses for the stakes race and leave him there for fans to admire while the race is being run.

The Wise Dan goes as Race 7 at 9:05 p.m.

The Pizza Man, an Illinois-bred son of English Channel, is the most accomplished horse in the race with 16 wins in 27 starts, including 11 stakes victories and \$1,908,722. He made headlines last summer when he beat **Big Blue Kitten** by a neck under Geroux in the \$1 million Arlington Million (GI) for his third stakes win in a row. After a fifth-place finish in the \$2.76 million Breeders' Cup Turf (GI), The Pizza Man ventured west and won the \$252,250 Hollywood Turf Cup (GII) at Del Mar under **Mike Smith**, who took over for Geroux when the connections felt a change was needed.

In his only start this year, The Pizza Man finished fifth and was beaten 3 3/4 lengths in the \$350,000 Gulfstream Park Handicap (GI) on Feb. 6.

"He really didn't like the Gulfstream turf at all," trainer **Roger Brueggemann** said. "That was the first time I had him on something that he didn't like. We're hoping he can still compete as a year older but I know how I feel when I'm a year older. Hopefully he'll be okay. So far he's been training real well (at Trackside Louisville) so we'll have to see what happens."

The Pizza Man boasts an impressive 10-8-1-0 record at the 1 1/16-mile Wise Dan distance, which will be his first race in four months.

"I think this race will be a nice little test for him," Brueggemann said. "It looks like there's going to be some nice horses in here."

The Pizza Man was made the 6-5 morning line favorite on **Mike Battaglia's** forecasted odds and will break from post 2.

Chief among The Pizza Man's rivals will be **Thatcher Street** and **Pleuven (FR)**, who ran 1-2 in the \$62,640 Opening Verse Overnight Stakes at Churchill Downs on May 21, and the **Mark Casse**-trained duo of Grade II winner **Conquest Typhoon** and \$1,392,666-earner **Za Approval**. Both competed in the \$250,000 Dixie (GII) on the Preakness undercard at Pimlico with Conquest Typhoon finishing fifth and Za Approval last of eight. The latter distained the "good" turf course in his first start as an 8-year-old.

The Wise Dan field from the rail out (with jockeys and morning line odds): Thatcher Street (**Brian Hernandez Jr.**, 8-1); The Pizza Man (Geroux, 6-5); **Granny's Kitten** (Gary Stevens, 12-1); **Flatlined** (Miguel Mena, 15-1); Conquest Typhoon (**Joe Bravo**, 6-1); **Potomac River** (Juan Vargas, 15-1); **R. Great Adventure** (Joe Rocco Jr., 15-1); Pleuven (FR) (**Channing Hill**, 8-1); Za Approval (**Julien Leparoux**, 12-1); **Kasaqui** (ARG) (Fernando De La Cruz, 12-1); and **Behesht** (FR) (**Corey Lanerie**, 20-1).

The Pizza Man will carry 123 pounds and all others tote 121.

KENTUCKY DERBY THIRD GUN RUNNER RETURNS IN SATURDAY'S GRADE III, \$100,000 MATT WINN

Winchell Thoroughbreds LLC, **Three Chimneys Farm LLC** and **Besilu Stables' Gun Runner**, winner of the Louisiana Derby (Grade II) and Risen Star (GII) at Fair Grounds before finishing third behind **Nyquist** and **Exaggerator** in the Kentucky Derby Presented by Yum! Brands (GI), heads a field of seven 3-year-olds for Saturday's 19th running of the \$100,000 Matt Winn (GIII).

The Matt Winn, which honors the famed Churchill Downs president and general manager that served as the driving force in the development of Churchill Downs and Kentucky Derby, will go as Race 5 on Saturday at approximately 7:57 p.m. (all times Eastern).

Trained by soon-to-be-inducted Hall of Famer **Steve Asmussen**, Gun Runner is using Saturday's 1 1/16-mile race as a springboard to the \$1 million Haskell Invitational (GI) at Monmouth Park that will be run six weeks later on Sunday, July 31.

"I think he's proved his worth with what he's done this year with the Louisiana Derby win and the third in the Kentucky Derby, and I think that this is a very good bridge for him to get to the Haskell," Asmussen said.

Overall, Gun Runner, a Kentucky-bred son of Candy Ride (ARG) out of the Giant's Causeway mare Quiet Giant, has a record of 6-4-0-1—\$1,106,920.

Asmussen, who collected his first Belmont Stakes win with **Creator** last weekend, will vie for his fourth triumph in the Matt Winn. He previous won the race with **Compendium** (2001), **Pyro** (2008) and **Tapiture** (2014).

The Matt Winn field from the rail out: Illinois-based **Yo Carm**, who won a first-level allowance-optional claiming race by 6 1/4 lengths this winter at Tampa Bay Downs (to be ridden by **Robby Albarado**); Gun Runner (**Florent Geroux**); Rushaway runner-up **Virtual Machine** (**Brian Hernandez Jr.**); **Cutcorner**, who participated in three Road to the Kentucky Derby races at Oaklawn this winter (**Gary Stevens**); the D. Wayne Lukas-trained **Gray Sky** (**James Graham**); **Texas Chrome**, 10 1/2-length winner of the \$75,000 Texas Stallion Stakes at Lone Star Park on May 15 (**Ricardo Santana Jr.**); and **Unbridled Outlaw**, last year's Iroquois (GIII) third who was runner-up to up-and-comer **The Player** in a one-mile allowance-optional claiming race on June 3 (**Corey Lanerie**).

Gun Runner will carry 123 pounds, while all others tote 118.

Kay Stillam's Cutcorner, trained by Hall of Famer **Jack Van Berg**, was supplemented to the race for \$3,000.

EDGEWOOD RUNNER-UP AUNTIE JOY RETURNS FOR SATURDAY'S GRADE III, \$100,000 REGRET

Sanford Robertson's Auntie Joy, runner-up to the streaking turf star **Catch a Glimpse** in the \$150,000 Edgewood Presented by Forcht Bank (Grade III) on the Kentucky Oaks undercard, returns to action against 10 other 3-year-old fillies in Saturday's 47th running of the \$100,000 Regret (GIII) at 1 1/8 miles over Churchill Downs' Matt Winn Turf Course.

The Regret, the last of five stakes on the Stephen Foster Handicap program, is scheduled as Race 9 at 10:11 p.m.

Auntie Joy, a daughter of North America's second-leading sire Uncle Mo, has won two of five starts and \$88,450. She was 31-1 on the tote board when she made a late rally in the Edgewood to just miss Catch a Glimpse by three-quarters of a length. Her odds figure to be much shorter Saturday when she breaks from the far outside for trainer **Brendan Walsh** and jockey **Brian Hernandez Jr.**

One of Auntie Joy's main rivals will be **Stefanie Carroll's Try Your Luck**, who'll face stakes company for the first time after scoring back-to-back runaway victories on turf: a 9 1/4-length maiden win at Keeneland over 1 1/16 miles and a 3 1/2-length first-level allowance triumph at 1 1/8 miles on May 14. The Lookin At Lucky filly is trained by **Mike Maker** and will be ridden by Hall of Fame jockey **Gary Stevens**.

The Regret field from the rail out: **Gone Away** (Florent Geroux); **Quiet Business** (Joe Rocco Jr.); **Crooked Stick** (James Graham); **Family Meeting** (Robby Albarado); **Noble Beauty** (Julien Leparoux); Try Your Luck (Stevens); **La Piba** (Fernando De La Cruz); **Dothraki Queen** (Corey Lanerie); **Fuhriously Kissed** (Joe Johnson); **Wessex** (Shaun Bridgmohan); and Auntie Joy (Hernandez Jr.). All fillies will carry 118 pounds.

Noble Beauty, trained by **Chad Brown**, and Wessex, trained by Hall of Famer **Bill Mott** (Churchill Downs' all-time win and stakes win leader), invade from New York. Family Meeting and Gone Away ship in from the Fair Hill Training Center in Maryland for trainers **Tom Proctor** and **Michael Matz**, respectively.

The Regret annually pays homage to the first filly to win the Kentucky Derby in 1915.

-END-